

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectively requested.

Claims 1-15, 28, 29, 32, and 33 are all the claims pending in the application. In response to the Office Action, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims define patentable subject matter.

**I. Interview**

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended to the Applicant's agent Blake Tankersley during the interview conducted on February 5, 2009.

**II. Prior Art Rejections**

Claims 1-3, 7, 8, 9, 11-13, 15, 28, 29, 32, and 35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 4-116051 (hereinafter JP '051) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,373,755 to Rohlinger (hereinafter Rohlinger). Claims 1-3, 7-9, 11-13, 15, 30, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 2,882,742 to Conant (hereinafter Conant) in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,379,643 to Merkel (hereinafter Merkel) and Rohlinger.

Claims 4-6, 10, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '051 in view of Rohlinger and U.S. Patent No. 6,089,117 to Ebina et al. (hereinafter Ebina). Claims 4-6, 10, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conant in view of Merkel, Rohlinger, and Ebina. Claims 28 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Conant in view of Merkel and Rohlinger.

***Analysis***

By this Amendment, Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 11 to recite "wherein the tube guide insertion hole is a through hole which penetrates the nut, and wherein an

entire depth of the tube guide insertion hole has an equal cross-section” and respectfully submits that the cited art does not disclose or suggest this recitation.<sup>2</sup>

Specifically, independent claims 1 and 11 generally relate to being able to use an ordinary machining tool, such as an ordinary drill bit, to create the tube guide insertion hole so that costs can be reduced (see page 8, lines 1-8). In order to use an ordinary machining tool, “an entire depth of the tube guide insertion hole [must have] an equal cross-section”. This is because ordinary machining tools only rotate about one axis and have a uniform diameter throughout, so they can only create holes that have uniform cross sections.

However, neither JP ‘051 or Conant disclose or suggest this recitation. Specifically, JP ‘051 and Conant both have a step like portion towards the bottom of the hole and do not have a through hole which has a uniform cross section all the way through the entire depth of the hole. Also, neither Rohlinger, Merkel, or Ebina cure this deficiency. Specifically, none of the cited references show a hole which has a uniform cross section all the way through the entire depth of the hole. Also, none of the cited references disclose any advantages to being able to use an ordinary machining tool in order to be able to machine the tube guide insertion hole.

Since none of the cited references disclose or suggest all of the recitations of independent claims 1 and 11, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of claims 1 and 11. Also, since claims 2-10, 12-15, 28, 29, 32, and 33 are dependent on claims 1 and 11 respectively, Applicant submits that claims 2-10, 12-15, 28, 29, 32, and 33 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency.

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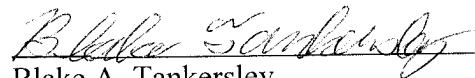
<sup>2</sup> Support is found in the Specification at least at Fig. 3 and page 8, lines 1-8.

**III. Conclusion**

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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